A

SERMON

Preached at the

TEMPLE-CHURCH,

December 30. 1694.

Upon the Sad Occasion of the

DEATH

OF OUR

Gracious Queen

And Published at the Earnest Request of several Masters of the Bench of both Societies.

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XXXIX Psalm 9.

I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.

THIS may be thought a very improper Text for the Feast of our Saviour's Birth, when our Mouths ought to be filled with the Praises of GOD, and sing with the whole Quire of Angels, 'Glory be to God in the highest, 'on earth peace, good will towards men. This indeed is that Peace, which the World cannot give, and which the World cannot take away; whatever the External Appearances of Providence are, here we find a safe Retreat, and a never-failing Spring of Joy: For, 'he that spared not 'his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he 'not with him also freely give us all things? Who then shall 'separat us from the love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or 'Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword? ---- Nay, in all these we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us. For I am perswad-

'ed, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principali-
'ties, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
'nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able
'to separat us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus
'our Lord, 8 *Rom.* 32, 35, 37, &c. While our minds are warmed with such Thoughts as these, we shall be able to bear up under the greatest Trials, if not with Chearfulness, yet at least with Patience, and a quiet Submission to the Will of God. And if ever there were occasion for such Comfortable and Supporting Thoughts, the Divine Providence has made it too necessary at this time, to bear the loss of an Incomparable Lady, our most Gracious Queen; whose Death all Good Subjects must lament, and I pray God forgive those that do not. Such severe Providences as these, will teach the greatest and most unbroken minds, to serve the Lord with fear, and to rejoyce with trembling. But how severe soever Providence is in some particular instances, the sense of the Divine Goodness in the Redemption of Mankind by the Incarnation and Death of his own Son, should teach us to be dumb and not to open our mouths, because they all are his doings.

In speaking to which words, I shall 1. Inquire, what may be called the doings of the Lord? 2. What it is to be dumb, and not to open our Mouths? 3. The force of this Argument to oblige us to a quiet and patient Submission under the greatest sufferings, That it is God's doing.

1. What may be called the Doing of the Lord? This may be thought a very needless question; for are there are there any Events, Good or Evil, which are not God's Doing? If we believe a particular Providence, we must answer, No; and yet some things are more peculiarly God's Doings, than others are, with respect to this present Argument, as Gods Doing it, is a reason for a quiet and patient Submission to the Divine Will.

In

In many cases men bring *Ruine* and *Misery* upon themselves by their own sin and folly; and then they may thank themselves for it; but have no reason to complain of Providence; and when they cannot charge Providence with their misfortunes, patience it self is not properly a Submission to God; because their Sufferings are no more Gods Will, than their sin and folly is.

If men destroy their Estates by prodigality, and their Bodies by intemperance and lust; if ill-contracted Friendships, indiscreet Bargains, or an ungovernable Tongue, perplex their Affairs, and prove very troublesome or dangerous, all this is owing not merely to Providence, but to themselves; and they must be contented to reap the fruit of their own doings, and ought to implore the *Divine* Goodness and Providence to deliver them from the evil Consequences of their own sin and folly.

Whatever evils we suffer, which are not the natural or moral effects of our own sin or folly; they are properly Gods Doings, as inflicted by God, either for the punishment of our sins, or for the Tryal and exercise of our Virtues, or to serve the wise ends of his Providence in the World.

Those Evils which we do not immediatly bring upon our selves, God inflicts on us, either by the ministry of wicked and injurious men, or by the Disorders of Natural Causes, or by some seeming casual and fortuitous Events; for the Actions of *Men*, the *Powers* of Nature, and what we call Chance and Fortune, are all in the hands of God, and therefore all such events are more or less his Doings.

But if we may say, that some things are more peculiarly the Care of Providence than others, Life and Death are certainly so; no man can be Born or *Die*, without the particular Order and Appointment of God: Our Saviour tells us, 'Not 'a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father, much less men;

men; and assures his Disciples, that all the hairs of their head are numbred, and their Lives are more Sacred than their hairs. Some men are of opinion, That God has absolutely Decreed the certain Term and Period of every mans Life; But I know no Foundation for this, either in Scripture or Reason; nor does any man believe it, but those who subject all mankind, and all the Things of this World, to irreversible Necessity and Fate; which is the strength of the Atheistick Hypothesis; though incautiously espoused by some men, who are so far from being Atheist, that I hope they are very good Christians. And therefore, I suppose, these Christian Fatalists, if I may so call them, mean no more than what we all own, That no Sparrow, much less a man, falls to the ground without our Fathers that God not only foreknows the period of every mans Life, and by what means he shall Die, but with infinit Wisdom and Justice, Orders and Appoints it, not by an absolute and unconditional Decree, but as the Wise Determination of a Free and Just Providence.

And if God have any more concernment for Nations and Commonwealths, than he has for particular men (as we, who can attend but a few things at once, and therefore make the matters of greatest importance our more particular Care, are apt to conceive) than the Lives and Deaths of Princes must be more particularly Ordered and Determined by God; because Nations, it may be many Nations and Countreys, more than their own, are concerned in the consequence of it; and of the more universal concernment any thing is, the more we are apt to think it belongs to the Care of God.

For this reason some Philosophers have confined the Providence of God to the Heavens, and Heavenly Bodies, which have such a universal influence on things below: or to Nations and Publick Societies, and to the several kinds and species of Beeings, not to particular Men or Creatures.

And

And so far they were in the right, that if the *Divine* Providence could not equally take care of the whole World, and of every particular Creature in it; it would certainly in the first place, take care of the great Springs of Motion. But though this be no reason for God's peculiar care of one thing more than another, because his All-seeing Eye, and Almighty Arm, can equally take care of all; yet our Saviour has taught us from the worth and value of things, that God will certainly take the more care of them, and in case of any Competition, give the Preference to things of the greatest moment. *Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they?* And *if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?* Matth. 6, 26, 30. Where from God's care of mean inferior Creatures, the Fowls of the Air, and the Grass of the Field, he more strongly concludes his care of men; and by the same reason from his care of particular men, we may more strongly conclude his care of Kingdoms and Nations, and therefore of the Lives of Princes, who are the great Ministers of his Government and Providence, and whose Lives or Deaths make such a mighty Change in the Affairs of the World. So that when, or by what means soever Princes die, it is Gods doing; and how severe soever we may feel it, *We must be dumb, and not open our mouths, because he has done it*; which is the second thing to be explained.

2. What is meant by being *dumb, and not opening our mouths*. For this seems a very hard saying in the strict literal sense, that we must not complain of our Sufferings, when we feel 'em smart. Humane Nature can't bear this, we must feel our Sufferings, and when we feel them, we must complain: to have no sense of of what we suffer, is Stupidity, not Submission; it is irreverence for the Judgments of God, and in some cases the most

unpardonable

unpardonable baseness and ingratitude to men, to be unconcerned for the Death of our dearest Friends, or greatest Patrons and Benefactors, not to pay Natures Tribute to their Memories in a Sigh and a Tear; not to long after them, and send some vain Wishes to call them back; not to preserve their Idea fresh in our minds, and to think with some uneasiness of those happy hours which their Conversation sweetned; to part with our Friends, as if we suffered nothing by their loss, and were as well without them, is so far from being a Vertue, that such a man is uncapable of ever being a Friend, & never deserves to have any; much more then, when we loss a publick Friend and Benefactor, the greatest of Friends and Benefactors, which is a good Prince.

Let us briefly consider what we have lost, in the loss of our Gracious Queen, and try if we can bear the thoughts of it without complaining. She was the Glory of her Sex, and an Ornament to the Crown she wore; made truly Great by Nature, Birth, and Education. She had a large and capacious Mind, a quick and lively Apprehension, and a piercing and solid Judgment: She had a strength and firmness of Mind beyond her Sex, and such a dexterity in managing the greatest Affairs, as would have become the greatest and most experienced Ministers. Never was there greater skill in Government with less fondness for it, which she could take up and lay down, with the same equality and indifferency of Mind: though, I doubt, I must unsay that; for she was always grieved at the occasion of taking the Government, and as glad to resign it.

Never was Majesty better tempered with easiness and sweetness. She knew how to be familiar, without making her self cheap, and to condescend without meanness. She had all the greatness of Majesty, with all the Vertues of Conversation; and knew very well what became her Table, and what became the Council-Board.

She

She understood her Religion, and loved it, and practised it; and was the greatest Example of the Age, of a constant, regular, unaffected Devotion, and of all the eminent Vertues of a Christian Life. In the midst of all the great Affairs of State, she would rather spare time from her sleep, than from her Prayers, where she always appeared with that great composure and serenity of Mind, as if her Court had been a Nunnery, and she had had nothing else to do in the World.

In all the Ease & Prosperity of Fortune, she had that tenderness & compassion for those who suffered, which sufferings themselves cannot teach meaner Persons. She was Charitable to the utmost of her Power, amidst all the Expenses of War and Government, and when a proper Object was presented to her, was always pleased when she could grant their Requests, and very uneasie to deny.

In short, her greatest and most implacable enemies, (for Vertue in fact will meet with Enemies in this World) had no other Fault to charge her with, but her Throne; which is the only thing, for which most other Princes are valuable. She ascended the Throne indeed before she desired it, but was thrust into it, not by an hasty Ambition, but to save a sinking Church and Kingdom. And I hope *England* will always have reason to say, that an empty Throne, could never have been filled with a nobler Pair.

But though the necessary absence of the King, to give check to the Progress of a powerful and insulting Monarch, engaged her more than she desired in State Affairs, yet the promoting of true Religion, and the service of the Church of *England*, as the greatest and best Nursery of it, since the Apostolick Age, I was her constant and natural Care. This her Thoughts were full of, and she had formed great and noble Designs, had she out-lived the Difficulties and Expenses of War; and been at leasure to attend the peaceful Arts of Government.

I have reason to say this, from those frequent Intimations I have had from our late admirable Primate, who had great Designs himself to serve the Christian Religion, and the Church of *England*, in its truest Interests; and had inspired their Majesties; and particularly the Queen, who had more leisure for such Thoughts, with the same great and pious Designs: it may be no Church-man ever had, I am sure not more deservedly, a greater Interest in his Prince's Favour; and the great use he made of it, was to do publick Service to Religion; and, whatever some men might suspect to the Church of *England*, though it may be not perfectly in their way: and the greatest Fault I know he had, was, that some envious and ambitious men could not bear his Greatness, which he himself never courted, nay, which he industriously avoided.

Before this, all *England* knew and owned his Worth; and had it been put to the Poll, there had been vast Odds on his side, that he would have been voted into the See of *Canterbury*; for no man had ever a clearer and brighter Reason, a truer Judgment, a more easie and happy Expression, nor a more inflexible fearless Honesty: he was a true and hearty Friend, and was a true Friend wherever he professed to be so: though he had many Enemies at last, he took care to make none. He was obliging to all men, and though he could not easily part with a Friend, he could easily forgive an Enemy, as that Bundel of Libels witnesses, which was found among his other Papers, with this Inscription: *These are Libels; I pray God forgive them, I do.*

But I cannot give you the just Character of this Great Man now; but what I have already said, I confess is an Excursion, which I hope you will pardon to the Passion of an old Friend; and learn from two great Examples, that neither the greatest Innocence, Vertue, or Merit, can defend, either Crowned or Mitred Heads from the lash of spiteful and envenomed Tongues. But what a loss has Religion and the Church of

England

England, in such a critical Time, in the Death of such a Queen, and such a Prelate! I pray God make up this Loss.

In a word, That great Passion which afflicts and oppresses our good King, gives an unexceptionable Testimony to the incomparable Worth of our deceased *Queen*: The too severe and visible Effects of it, shew, that it is not an ordinary, nor a dissembled Passion: Nor is it an ordinary thing, for a Prince of so great a Mind, who can look the most formidable Dangers, and Death it self, in the face, without fear; whom all the Powers of *France* cannot make look pale or tremble; to sink and faint, and to feel all the Agonies of *Death* in the dying Looks of a Beloved Consort. All Story cannot furnish us with many Examples of such soft and tender Passions, in such a warlike and fearless Mind; and what but a mighty Vertue could so charm a Prince, as to forget his natural Constancy and Resolution? I'm sure, though we pay very dear for the Experiment in the loss of an excellent *Queen*, we have so much the more reason to think our selves happy in a *King*; for a due mixture and temperament of such fearless Courage and Bravery, and such tender Passions, is the most perfect Composition of an excellent Prince.

And now, it may be, you will tell me, that I have taken great Pains to confute my Text, and that I have done it effectually; for we ought not to be dumb, but may very justly complain of such a loss as this.

This I readily grant, That we may complain of such a loss; but this is no confutation of my Text, We may complain, and give Ease and Vent to our Sorrows by such Complaints, while we do not complain against God, and accuse him foolishly. To submit to the Will of God, which is here exprest by being *Dumb, and not opening our Mouths*, does not signifie, not to feel our Losses and Sufferings, or not to complain of them; but not to reproach the *Divine Providence*, nor

to cast off our Hope and Trust in God? *Job* felt his Sufferings, and complained of them in as moving and tragical expressions, as any other Man could, and yet is proposed to us, as an Example of admirable Patience, because he did not *Charge God foolishly*, nor cast off his Hope in him.

This we never can have any reason for; for whatever we suffer, it is a wise and merciful Providence which inflicts it: But yet Mankind are very apt, when they suffer hard things, either to deny a Providence, or which is more absurd, and unreasonable, to reproach; for if there be a God, he is Wise, and Good, and Merciful, and Just, which is the Notion all Mankind have of God; and if this God governs the World, all Events are ordered with Wisdom, Justice and Goodness; and all thinking Men, in cool and sober Thoughts, will be ashamed to quarrel with such a providence.

But yet we are very apt to ask Questions, which we cannot easily answer, and then to make our own Ignorance an Objection against the Divine Providence.

As in the Case before us of the sudden and untimely Death of an excellent Princess, who had Strength and Vigour of Age, which promised a much longer Life, and who would certainly have done great Good to the World, as long as she had lived; but is cut off in the Vigour and Strength of Age, and all her Thoughts, even all her great and excellent Designs of doing Good to the World, perish with her; while Tyrants and Oppressors live to be the Plagues and Scourges of Mankind.

Now though we do not know the particular Reasons of such Providences, yet it is easie to frame some general Answers, which may satisfie all the Friends of Providence.

If the Objection relates to our selves, who suffer by this loss, there is a very plain Answer to it, but a very terrible one; That God is Angry with us, and by the untimely Death of an excellent

excellent Princess, who made it her whole Study and Design to do us Good, threatens his Judgments against us, if we do not take Care to prevent them by a timely Repentance.

If the Objection relates only to the untimely Death of an excellent Princess, that she should so suddenly be snatched away from the Joys and Pleasures of a Throne; this is no Objection at all; at least not an Objection fit for Christians to make: For can we think, that the greatest and most happy Monarch, loses any thing by the Exchange, if he be translated from Earth to Heaven? That the Joys of Paradise are not greater than a Crown? Our good *Queen* did not think so, who knew what a Earthly Crown meant, but was willing to part with it for Heaven; who saw Death approaching without fear, and prepared to receive its Stroke with such calmness and sedateness of Mind, as nothing could give but an innocent Conscience, and much greater Hopes.

And yet as for your selves, though we must acknowledge that we have received a very great Loss, in the Death of an excellent *Queen*, yet we have no reason to quarrel at Providence, while God preserves our King to go in and out before us. We had indeed perpetual Day; and no sooner was one Sun withdrawen, but another ascended our Horizon, with equal Lustre and Brightness: This was a peculiar Happiness which we never had before, and which the Necessity of our Affairs required now; but though God has cut us short in this, we have a King still, the Terror of *France*, and the Protector of *Europe*; a King, whom Affection as well as Blood has Naturalized to us; who loves our Nation and our Church, which he has once delivered, and God grant he may live long to settle and protect both. We have no reason to fear our Enemies, either at home or abroad, while a Prince is at the Helm, who wants neither Counsel nor Courage; especially if we follow that noble Example, which the Two Houses of Parlia-

Parliament have set us, to give him such fresh Assurances of our Fidelity, as may strengthen his Hands against his and our Enemies Abroad, and make him easie and safe at Home.

To conclude, this is God's doing, and it becomes us to be dumb, and not to open our Mouthes, because he has done it: He is the Soveraign and Unaccountable Lord of the World, who shal say unto him, What dost thou? Life and Death are in his Hands, the Fates of Princes and Kingdoms. That he has done it, it should be a sufficient Reason to us to submit, because though he does things great and wonderful, and beyond our Understanding, yet he never does any thing but what is wise and good: This I'm sure is the most effectual Way to turn even the severest Judgements into Blessings, to reverence God, and to humble our selves under his mighty Hand, and to implore his Mercy, to repair those Breaches he has made upon us. We must not complain of Providence; but we may make our Complaints to God, and be the more importunat in our Prayers for the Preservation of our King. The Death of our Excellent Queen both calls for, and will justifie and recommend such humble Importunities; and the Preservation of our King, will, in a great measure, make up this Loss to us; *Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for ever,* Amen.

FINIS.

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